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THESIS

THE PERSPECTIVES AND EXPERIENCES OF BLACK FEMALE NAVAL OFFICERS

by

Voresa E. Jones

March 1999

Thesis Co-Advisors: George W. Thomas
                                        Mark J. Eitelberg

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This thesis examines the perspectives and experiences of Black female naval officers and explores reasons why they joined the Navy and their attitudes toward continued service. Eighteen in-depth interviews were conducted in Monterey, California and Washington, DC. Twelve general themes were developed as a result of the interviews. These themes covered topics such as reasons for joining, experiences while in the Navy, concerns about recruitment of minorities, perceptions about racism, perceptions of inequitable treatment, and feelings about being "the only one." Conclusions drawn from the research reveal a need for continued understanding of the problems and issues confronting Black female naval officers. Recommendations are offered for courses of action that may help with the recruitment and retention of Black female naval officers and the leadership of a diverse Navy.

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Voresa E. Jones
Lieutenant Commander, United States Navy
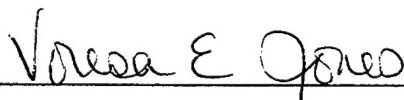B.S., Lane College

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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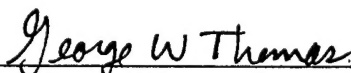
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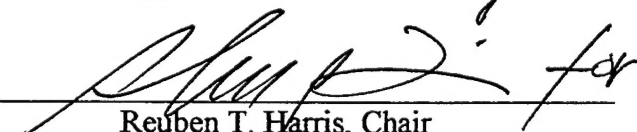**March 1999**

Author: _____
Voresa E. Jones

Approved by: _____
George Thomas, Thesis Co-Advisor

_____
Mark J. Eitelberg, Thesis Co-Advisor

_____
Reuben T. Harris, Chair
Department of Systems Management

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the perspectives and experiences of Black female naval officers and explores reasons why they joined the Navy and their attitudes toward continued service. Eighteen in-depth interviews were conducted in Monterey, California and Washington, DC. Twelve general themes were developed as a result of the interviews. These themes covered topics such as reasons for joining, experiences while in the Navy, concerns about recruitment of minorities, perceptions about racism, perceptions of inequitable treatment, and feelings about being "the only one." Conclusions drawn from the research reveal a need for continued understanding of the problems and issues confronting Black female naval officers. Recommendations are offered for courses of action that may help with the recruitment and retention of Black female naval officers and the leadership of a diverse Navy.

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I.   INTRODUCTION

A.   BACKGROUND

Today, the armed forces of virtually all nations have female service members. In the United States Navy, women account for about 14 percent of active-duty commissioned officers. Women have served in the U.S. armed forces since the founding of the nation; yet, very little, if any, research or analysis addressed issues concerning women in the military before the 1970s. Racial distinctions between women are frequently not made in previous research. Indeed, many issues concerning African-American women in the military have been practically ignored.

The problems facing African-American women in a predominately male institution may be additionally compounded by racial and ethnic group factors. African-American women in the Navy are not only in a predominantly male institution, they are in a predominantly *white* male institution. Consequently, African-American women are a minority in the Navy on at least two counts, gender as well as race; and any problems associated with minority status in an organization are often much more complicated for these service women. [Ref 1:p. 137]

If the effects of sexism vary according to race, then attention must be given to race-gender groups in research designs. Identification of differences among Black and White women will dispel the concept that portrays the experience of White, often middle class, women as the experience of womankind. Traditional approaches set up White women as the norm against which Black women may appear to be atypical cases.

Black women have had to reconcile being strong, independent, economic providers and also being wives, mothers, and feminine women. The constant cultural assault on their identity, being labeled "jezebels," "matriarchs," and "sapphires" (women who are in control behind the scenes and tell the men what to do) results from the dominant culture's views of Black women. The reality of racism continues to shape the context with which Black women develop and construct their definitions of womanhood. As a result, Black women's conceptions of womanhood emphasize self-reliance, strength, resourcefulness, autonomy, and the responsibility of providing for the family's material and emotional needs. [Ref 5:pp. 33-36]

B. PURPOSE OF STUDY

Currently, the Navy is trying to increase the recruitment and retention of minority officers. [Ref 2:p. 162] This thesis studies a subset of these minority

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officers--the Black female naval officer--and focuses on the attitudes and experiences of Black women in the officer ranks of the United States Navy. Particular attention is given to their choice to affiliate with the Navy, both at the time of joining and at points of continuation in service.

C.   SCOPE OF STUDY

This thesis seeks to identify the underlying reasons why Black women choose to serve in the Navy and why they stay.   This thesis gathers information from in-depth interviews with Black female naval officers. The interview results are then analyzed to provide insights on the effect of various policies on Black female officers in the Navy. Finally, the data are used to illuminate a research agenda for follow-on research regarding minority female naval officers.

D.   BENEFIT OF STUDY

A Hudson Institute study, *Workforce 2000*, predicted that by the year 2000, 85 percent of new entrants into the workforce would be minorities, immigrants, and women. [Ref 6:p. 85]   These workforce changes are already having a major impact on the Navy, as the labor pool shifts in composition to include approximately three-fifths women and one-third

minorities.   As a result, the Navy's proportions of minorities and women are expected to increase. [Ref 7:p. 5]

This thesis provides valuable insight and information to assist the Department of the Navy and the Department of Defense (DOD) in understanding the impact of the Navy's culture on the attainment of recruitment and retention goals for Black female naval officers.   Additionally, this research may help personnel officials better understand the interwoven issues of race and gender and their effects on Black female naval officers.

E.   ORGANIZATION OF THESIS

This thesis attempts to build a foundation for future research regarding Black female naval officers and their attitudes, experiences, and opinions about naval culture, retention, and recruitment.   Chapter II presents a literature review of the history and social issues of Black women and provides information on the representation of Black women in the Navy.   Chapter III presents the research methodology of this thesis.   Chapter IV presents themes developed from analysis of the interviews.   Chapter V discusses major conclusions drawn from research findings. Recommendations for Navy policies based on the study, as well as recommendations for further research, are additionally offered in the final chapter.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. HISTORY OF BLACK FEMALES IN THE MILTARY

Although considerable information exists on the extent to which Blacks were present in the nation's armed forces since Colonial times, historical records on Black women in the military are sketchy at best. Historically, Black women have willingly shared the burden of national defense out of a sense of moral obligation to the country but also in an attempt to demonstrate their worthiness for full citizenship. [Ref 8:p. 116]

1. Colonial Days

During the pre-Colonial and the Colonial Periods, Black women played great support roles. They would move into the "big house" with the wife of the slave-owner when he went away to serve in the military, and they tended to the slave-owner's wounds when necessary. Black women also worked with the men in building fortifications for safety from both the Indians and the British. [Ref 1:p. 12]

2. Revolutionary War

The greatest role that the Black woman played during the Revolutionary War was that of spying on the British and keeping Colonial authorities informed. When freedom was promised to those who helped in the war, Black women saw this as an opportunity to earn their own freedom. Black

women sometimes disguised themselves as men and actually fought against the British. [Ref 1:p. 12]

3. The War of 1812

The War of 1812 was mainly a naval war, so all women were limited in what they could do. Black women did help white women make bandages and tend to the wounded sailors. Black women's major contribution was taking charge of the farm and running things at home while the White men went off to war. [Ref 1:p. 17]

4. Civil War

Harriet Tubman was one of the greatest Black female soldiers during the Civil War. She was a union spy, volunteer nurse, and freedom fighter who had an intense love for freedom. She could not receive pay for her services, but she was often in the fields with the soldiers. She eventually earned the name "General" Tubman.

Another famous Black woman who volunteered to help the troops during the Civil War was Susan King Taylor. Through the American Red Cross, she was a volunteer nurse and launderer for Black troops as she traveled with the 33rd United States Colored Troops. [Ref 1:p. 20]

5. The Spanish-American War

Volunteer nurses were badly needed because the Army was not able to make adequate medical personnel available for

combat units during this war. Typhoid fever accounted for over 75 percent of soldiers' deaths during this war. Black women were thought to be immune to the disease because of their thick Black skin. Black women exposed themselves willingly to the disease by nursing the sick. Many of these Black women became sick themselves after they returned home. Because of the racially segregated housing, Whites never knew the high rate of deaths among the Black women as a result of their wartime service. [Ref 1:p. 28]

4.   World War I

World War I was the first major conflict in which Black women had a recognized organization to provide them with leadership and direction in their use as a resource. The National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses had been founded in 1909.   Even though Black women served in the military, they were not actually recruited until two months before World War I ended.   Black nurses eventually became a part of the Army Nurse Corps after the influenza outbreak in 1919. [Ref 1:p. 29]

5.   World War II

World War II provided the first opportunity for a large number of Black women to serve in the military.   In 1942, President Roosevelt signed Public Law 554, enabling Black women to serve in the Women's Army Corps (WAC) in large numbers both as officers and enlisted personnel. The first

year of its operation, 2,532 Black women served in the WAC. In addition to the WAC, Black women served in the Army Nurse Corps. In 1943, 160 Black nurses were commissioned in the Army.

The Women's Reserve for the Navy (WAVES) was established in 1942, but Black women were not permitted to join. As the recruiting of Black men for the Navy and Coast Guard continued at an accelerated rate during 1943, the demand for acceptance of Black women in the women's units continued, but Black women were not permitted to join the WAVES until 1944. In October 1944, President Truman approved the acceptance of less than a dozen Black women into the WAVES, and two Black women were commissioned as Ensigns. [Ref 9:p 34]

Even though women were accepted into the WAVES, it was specified that Black women would be quartered separately and would see duty only in areas where there were a large number of Black seamen on a base. [Ref 1:pp. 137-144]

In 1948, President Truman initiated a path toward racial desegregation in the armed forces when he issued Executive Order 9981. [Ref 4:p 222] The Women's Armed Services Integration Act was also passed in 1948. This act allowed women to serve in the military, but with restrictions. The Secretary of Defense, Louis Johnson, ordered the end of racial discrimination and accepted a plan

for securing equality for Navy and Marine Corps personnel in 1949. [Ref 1:p. 38]

In 1950, Annie L. Grimes became one of the first three Black women to enlist in the Marine Corps. She later became a Warrant officer and was also the first Black woman to retire after a full, 20-year career. [Ref 9:p. 35]

Black women have been struggling throughout history to break through the attitudinal and societal barriers shaped by traditions and myths about the military institution. This struggle was never about seeking special privileges or double standards. It was, however, about being allowed to compete on the basis of ability, not ethnicity or gender. It was also about being allowed to pursue a naval career based on individual qualifications and character rather than racial and gender stereotypes. [Ref 9:p. 37]

B.   BLACK FEMALE REPRESENTATION IN THE NAVY

Since 1949, "equality of opportunity" has been the official policy in the Navy, and women now serve in almost every occupation and in all branches of the organization. As of 1998, there were over 51,000 women in the Navy, accounting for 13 percent of the total active-duty force. Over 43,000 of the total were enlisted women (12.9 percent of enlisted force), and almost 8,000 were female officers (13.9 percent of the officer corps). [Ref 10]

Although African-American women accounted for about 12 percent of the total female population in the United States in 1998, they made up about 30 percent of all women serving on active duty in all branches of the armed services. [Ref 8:p. 129] At the same time, Black women are underrepresented in the Navy's officer corps. As of November 1998, there were 795 Black female naval officers (10.2 percent of all female officers and only 1.4 percent of the Navy's officer corps as a whole). Table 1.1 shows the distribution of female naval officers, by racial/ethnic group, from 1990 to 1998.

Table 1.1 Number and Percentage Distribution of Female Officers in the Navy, by Racial/Ethnic Group, Fiscal Year 1990-1998

Fiscal Year	Black	% Black	White	% White	*Other	% Other	Total
1990	594	7.6	6,782	8.7	451	5.8	7,827
1991	631	7.9	6,883	8.6	482	6.0	7,996
1992	675	8.1	7,118	8.6	507	6.1	8,300
1993	687	8.3	7,013	8.5	571	6.9	8,271
1994	684	8.6	6,704	8.4	590	7.0	7,978
1995	720	9.1	6,534	8.3	645	8.2	7,899
1996	715	9.1	6,487	8.3	643	8.2	7,845
1997	758	9.7	6,319	8.1	725	9.3	7,802
1998	790	10.2	6,238	8.0	755	9.7	7,783

Source: Derived from data provided by the Defense Manpower Data Center and Manpower, Personnel and Planning Officer Inventory Reports.
*Other includes Native American, Alaskan, Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and unknown.

The proportion of Black female naval officers has increased from 7.6 percent in 1990 to 10.2 percent in 1998, while the proportion of white female naval officers has

decreased from 87 percent to 80 percent. The proportion of Black female officers continued to increase while the proportion of White female officers decreased due to force drawdowns and a relatively heavy recruitment of minorities into the Navy's officer corps.

Although recent trends show an increase in the percentage of Black female naval officers, they are underrepresented among higher-ranking officers. Table 1.2 shows the number of Black and White female officers by rank from 1990 through 1998. Additionally, Table 1.3 shows the percentage of Black female officers in each rank.

Table 1.2. Number of Black and *Non Black (NB) Female Officers in the Navy, by Rank, Fiscal Years 1990-1998

	ENS		LTJG		LT		LCDR		CDR		CAPT		ADM	
FY	Black	NB	Black	NB	Black	NB	Black	NB	Black	NB	Black	NB	Black	NB
1990	115	985	97	995	263	2,557	89	1,560	24	528	3	111	0	2
1991	117	995	99	935	274	2,576	101	1,597	28	562	3	117	0	3
1992	108	1,071	117	1,005	292	2,551	103	1,565	43	655	3	130	0	3
1993	99	958	115	978	311	2,570	101	1,505	44	718	4	142	0	2
1994	89	760	108	1,034	308	2,541	115	1,323	44	766	7	164	0	3
1995	117	783	94	934	294	2,416	140	1,305	47	805	11	187	0	4
1996	117	785	93	907	292	2,411	138	1,284	47	809	11	186	0	5
1997	102	700	124	773	278	2,323	164	1,319	59	890	12	231	0	5
1998	102	679	124	798	292	2,256	169	1,296	68	873	15	263	1	5

Source: Derived from data provided by the Defense Manpower Data Center and Manpower, Personnel and Planning Officer Inventory Reports. *Non-Black includes all female officers except Black

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Table 1.3.
Percent of Female Officers in the Navy who are Black,
by Rank, Fiscal Years 1990-1998

FY	ENS	LTJG	LT	LCDR	CDR	CAPT	ADM
1990	10.5	8.9	9.3	5.4	4.3	2.6	0.0
1991	10.5	9.6	9.6	5.9	4.7	2.5	0.0
1992	9.2	10.4	10.3	6.2	6.2	2.3	0.0
1993	9.4	10.5	10.8	6.3	5.8	2.7	0.0
1994	10.5	9.5	10.8	8.0	5.4	4.1	0.0
1995	13.0	9.1	10.8	9.7	5.5	5.6	0.0
1996	13.0	9.3	10.8	9.7	5.5	5.6	0.0
1997	12.7	13.8	10.7	11.1	6.2	4.9	0.0
1998	13.1	13.4	11.5	11.5	7.2	5.4	16.7

Source: Derived from data provided by the Defense Manpower Data Center and Manpower, Personnel and Planning Officer Inventory Reports.

Even though Black women accounted for 10 percent of all female naval officers in 1998, they made up less than 4 percent of those serving in the ranks of Commander through Admiral. Women were promoted to the rank of Admiral as early as 1982, but the Navy did not promote its first Black female naval officer to this rank until 1998.

Navy women are concentrated in two occupational areas: administrative/support and medical services. At the same time, technical fields have the most limited number of women. There are several reasons for the large concentration of women in administrative and medical occupations. An obvious reason is the combat-exclusion policy that limited women's role in "warrior" occupations. There is also evidence that women in uniform tend to select "traditionally-female" occupations. [Ref 8:p. 132]

The number of Black female officers assigned to medical occupations has continued to increase over the 1990s. Another identifiable trend is that proportionately fewer Black women than White women can be found in "tactical" occupations. These occupations are considered the "core" field of the Navy, since the primary mission of the organization involves combat operations. As a result, the fact that proportionately few Black women serve in "tactical" fields may lead to White-Black disparities in career advancement opportunities among female naval officers in the future. [Ref 11:p. 47]

If this trend continues, it may also decrease the representation of Black women in the officer corps, as the Navy becomes more technical. It is important that more studies be conducted on all subgroups of minorities to determine the effects of the changing demographics of the workforce combined with a more technical Navy.

C.   STUDIES OF BLACK WOMEN IN THE MILITARY

A few studies have been conducted on the participation of Black women in the Armed Forces. Brenda Moore explored historical and current trends in the participation of Black women in the active military and offered hypotheses about future trends. Her study was conducted in 1988 to discover why Black women were joining the military in proportionately greater numbers than women of any other racial or ethnic

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backgrounds. For example, of all civilian Black women who were either in the labor force or enrolled in school in 1988, 3.7 in every 1,000 enlisted in the military. This rate of enlistment compares with 1.3 in every 1,000 White women. [Ref 8:p. 115]

According to Moore, Black women also tended to serve longer than did their White counterparts. This finding was explained by the fact that Black women have fewer employment opportunities in the civilian sector. Moore additionally found that Black women were more likely than non-Black women to enter the officer corps through the Navy Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC). This is significant, because most Blacks are trained in ROTC programs at historically Black colleges and have been said to lack the adequate preparation necessary to excel beyond the level of low-ranking officers. [Ref 8: p 120] Moore's study further found that Black women were more likely to serve in medical and administrative jobs than in the technical occupations. [Ref 8:P. 128]

Schyler Webb conducted a study of Black women in the Navy in 1994. Webb found that Black female naval officers experienced more role conflict and ambiguity than did their non-Black counterparts regarding job expectations and responsibilities. He also found that Black women in the military reported more job-role difficulties than did Black women in corporate settings; and that Black women in the

military reported more organizational skepticism about their level of competence than did Black women in the corporate world. [Ref 9:p. 119]

D. NAVY'S EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM

As the Navy became more racially and gender diverse, a greater need was found for accurate data about perceptions of equal opportunity (EO) and the occurrence of sexual harassment. The official policy of the U.S. Navy is "to insure equality of opportunity and treatment of all military members, regardless of race, creed, color, sex or national origin." [Ref 12:p. 16] To achieve this goal, the Navy attempts to:

> Increase and intensify…efforts to attain and retain the highest quality officer from all segments of society, seeking to achieve increased representation of minority personnel in the various categories and grades of the service which is proportional to the demography of the source populations....

> Identify and eliminate all bias, i.e., insure equal opportunity for; selection for programs, appointments or promotion; classification to occupational fields; technical and professional schooling, development experiences and progression in duty assignment; performance evaluations, pro-pay; advancement and promotion; retention, reenlistment and career status; etc....

> Achieve and guarantee legal and administrative process which are responsive to minority as well as majority personnel....

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Conduct workshops, conferences and educational, recreational and social programs....

Enhance interracial understanding, cooperation and respect among all...personnel. [Ref 2:p 2]

In 1989, the Navy began assessing the EO climate through the Navy Equal Opportunity/Sexual Harassment (NEOSH) Survey. The 1997 NEOSH Survey was administered to a random sample of 14,453 active-duty and enlisted personnel stratified by racial/ethnic group and gender. Over 5,800 surveys were returned.

Responses to the survey questions were analyzed for differences between racial/ethnic groups, between men and women, and between officer and enlisted personnel. The following is a summary of the race/gender-related results:

- Black women continue to have the least positive EO climate perceptions of all race/gender groups surveyed.
- The frequency of some racial discrimination behaviors, such as negative comments and offensive jokes, remain high.
- Responses to questions about discrimination widely differ between Blacks and Whites.
- Rates of harassment of female officers have increased. Also, the percentage of women reporting harassment by higher-level supervisors has increased.
- Twenty-eight percent of female officers report experiencing gender discrimination during the past 12 months. [Ref 25]

Officers were asked if they had been the target of eight different types of racial/ethnic discrimination behaviors during the past year (1996) while on duty or on

base/ship while off duty. The percentage of officers responding "yes," by type of discrimination, is shown in Table 1.4.

Table 1.4. Percentage of Officers who Experienced Discrimination Behavior, by Type and Race (White/Black), 1997

| Type of Behavior | Percent who experienced behavior | |
	White	Black
Negative Comments	18	20*
Offensive jokes	13	15
Ignored by others	12	22
Given menial jobs	11	12
Not asked to socialize	5	13
Denied potential Reward/benefit	4	9
Physically threatened	7	2
Physically assaulted	2	0*

Note: * Statistically significant differences (p < .01).

Source: The Navy Equal Opportunity/Sexual Harassment Survey 1997.

E.   BLACK WOMEN IN THE LABOR FORCE

Black women have been an integral part of the American labor force since their arrival as slaves to this country. Webb reported that, during the institution of slavery (circa 1619-1865), Black women were exploited sexually and had to perform work defined as typically-female. At the same time, however, Black women were forced to do the same arduous work as men. By 1870, more than 80 percent of Black women were

part of the sharecropping system. Through this system, Black families would live on one piece of land for as long as four generations, taking care of the crops for property owners in payment for their room and board. It wasn't until the 20th century that the percentage of Black women in agriculture dropped to almost 50 percent. [Ref 9:pp.27-28]

The story of Black women's labor market status is one of dramatic progress. Between 1985 and 1995, 1.5 million Black women entered the labor force, bringing the 1995 total to 7.6 million. Historically, Black women have had much higher participation rates than White or Hispanic women. Between 1995-1998, however, participation rates for Black and White women have been almost identical. For example, in 1995, Black women achieved a labor force participation rate of 59.5 percent, while White women participated at 59.0 percent. Labor force projections for the year 2005 show that Black women's participation rate will be slightly lower than that of White women--58.8 percent and 62.6 percent, respectively. Hispanic women (52.6 percent in 1995) continued to have a lower participation rate than did Black or White women. And Hispanic women also have a lower projected rate of participation as well: 53.6 percent in 2005. [Ref 13]

More and more Black women continue to enter the higher paying, career-oriented managerial and professional

specialty occupations. There was a 75 percent increase of Black women entering these occupations from 1985 to 1995. [Ref 13]

Despite their gains in the labor force, Black women are paid comparatively less than many other workers. For example, in 1995, the earnings of Black women employed were about 85 percent of the income of comparably-employed White women, 86 percent of the income of Black men, and just 63 percent of what White men earned. Additionally, the average Black family income was only 54 percent of what White families earned in 1993. In 1993, women maintained nearly half of all Black families, and 53 percent of all single-parent households were living in poverty. Further, Black women were nearly three-times as likely as White women to be living in poverty and twice as likely to be unemployed. [Ref 13]

Studies have shown that Black women do not see labor-force participation and being a wife and/or mother as mutually exclusive. On average, they tend to see employment as an integral, normative, and traditional component of the roles of wife and mother. [Ref 15: pp. 58-60].

F. SOCIAL ISSUES OF BLACK WOMEN

Throughout American history, Black women have played a significant role in the development of civilization.

Because their ties with Africa were abruptly severed, and because their greater struggle for survival compelled a speedier adaptation to a new life here, they have placed their imprint in our national life. Indeed, Black women are responsible to a large degree for Black people adapting to American life. The economic role of the Black woman was important to the rise of the Black bourgeoisie.
[Ref 15:p. 247]

1.   The Black Woman's Role in the Family

Black women have been caught between two functions: they were expected to enhance the material quality of life for their families and, at the same time, behave like housewives. [Ref 15:p. 256] To build the Black home was to build the Black nation in America. And, at the center of it all were Black women. Margaret Washington believed that Black women would be the "deliverer, for through them will come the earnest, faithful service for the highest development of home and family that will result in the solution of the so-called race problem". [Ref 16:p. 43]

Gwendolyn Brook's *Maud Martha* suggests that Black women have tended to give up on marital relationships when they felt that their partners were making less of a contribution than needed, or when the relationship no longer seemed essential to the happiness of their children. [Ref 18: pp. 26-28.]

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By the end of the 1930s, women headed 25 percent of all Black families, and one out of every three Black women over the age of fourteen was divorced or separated. Data from the turn of the century reveal that black households were less likely to be nuclear and more likely to be headed by women, a pattern that persists today. [Ref 5:p. 171]

Currently, one-fourth of all young Black men in America, aged 16 to 34 are either in prison or on parole. *At the same time, two-thirds of all of today's Black male high school students will be dead, disabled, or in prison before their thirtieth birthday.* [Ref 21] For every Black man who goes to college, three will go to prison. In Washington DC, half of all Black men in the city are currently in jail or on parole as of 1998. More than 90 percent had arrest records. The same is true of inner-city Black men in Maryland, New York, New Jersey, and Florida. By the year 2000, it is predicted that about half of *all* Black men in America will have gone to prison. And, because they will be Black men with a prison record, they will have severe employment difficulties, often unemployable. As a result, the Black family unit is being destroyed, and women have no other choice but to continue taking care of the family. [Ref 21]

Black women in families tend to have fewer formal marriages, experience parenthood earlier in marriage, have a

lower likelihood of remarriage, and have a higher divorce rate. About 80 percent of black children, compared with 36 percent of White children, are likely to experience part of their life in a female-headed household. [Ref 5:p. 176]

Black families have a strong willingness to absorb others into kin structures by creating a network of fictive kin, where friends "become" family. These fictive kin provide support that benefits all members of the family. [Ref 15:p. 151]

A report by Daniel Moynihan suggested that, in the numerous Black families headed by women, a "Black matriarchy" exists in which decision-making and other family powers and responsibilities rest with women rather than with men. Perceptions of the so-called Black matriarchy have reinforced stereotypes of superhuman Black women and weak and absent Black men, who are then blamed for the circumstances in which they find themselves. [Ref 5:p. 36] The myth of a Black matriarchy has been challenged by many. [Ref 17:p. 125] The Moynihan Report suggested that "jobs had primacy and the government should not rest until every able-bodied Negro man was working *even if this meant that some women's jobs had to be redesigned to enable men to fulfill them."* (Emphasis added.) Not *White* men's jobs-- women's jobs. This report was viewed as being more sexist than racist. [Ref 16:p 198]

2. The Black Woman's Role in the Civil Rights Movement

At the turn of the twentieth century, when Blacks faced lynching, mob violence, segregation and disenfranchisement, groups of Black women came forth with a plan of organized resistance. Black women organized clubs as far back as the 1890s to speak on their own behalf. Several Black women's organizations, such as the National Association of Colored Women, dealt with issues of race leadership, negative stereotypes, women's suffrage and women's rights, and civil rights and civil liberties over the decades.

Race work became the means wherein Black women could change their image and, from their point of view, lift up the race. There were differences in the various organizations but the guiding principle behind them all was racial uplift through self-help. They believed they could help solve the race's problems through intensive social service focused on improving home life and educating mothers. Black women were doubly oppressed: as women and as Blacks. Therefore, when Black women spoke, they spoke for all the masses. They felt that only when Black women were totally free would the Black race be free. [Ref 16:p. 24]

By the 1920s many Black women's organizations were working closely with Black men in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), but the

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underlying gender tension continued. Black women's organizations openly criticized Black men. An article in *National Association Notes* claimed that "the Negro Woman has practically carried her own man on her back, her children by the hand, while she fought off the men of other races...."

The shift to Civil Rights and community service left Black women without an organization that spotlighted their particular struggles with sexual discrimination. The Civil Rights movement necessitated an organization that focused mainly on race issues. Because the Civil Rights movement addressed concerns that all Blacks, including Black women, had about the race, the subtle shift in focus occurred almost unconsciously. [Ref 15: pp. 299-302]

As Andrew Young concluded: "Up until 1968, the Civil Rights movement was really a middle-class movement. There were middle-class goals, middle-class aspirations, middle-class membership, and even though a lot of poor people went to jail, it was still essentially a middle-class operation." [Ref 15:p. 313]

The late 1960s and early 1970s were a period of learning for many groups, including Black women who felt betrayed or not represented by the Black and women's movements of the civil rights era. The creation of the National Welfare Rights Organization in 1967 and the

National Black Feminist Organization in 1973 put Black women back at the center of race progress. [Ref 15:p. 305]

White suggests that Black women today are doing not just what women in the 1890s did, but what Black women have done throughout the century. They are feeling the effects of both racism and sexism and are concerned about issues affecting both women and Blacks. Black women still seek each other as natural allies. They expect relief from their alienation and sometimes they get it. As satisfying as it is to work together, personality clashes, regional allegiances, class, sexuality, and ideological differences make gender and race sameness no guarantee of a beloved sisterhood. [Ref 16:p. 263]

3. The Black Woman's "Self-concept"

As observed by Lee Jenkins, being Black in the United States is less a racial identity than a subordinate social role. This inferior status, when internalized, can result in a confused self-identity, lowered self-esteem, and serious sex-role conflicts. Despite divisions of Blacks into the middle class, working class, and underclass, issues of self-esteem remain. [Ref 19:p.6] Blacks in the United States have been deprived of the means to develop a self-respecting, independently-affirmed identity, and instead have been conditioned to conform to White-superiority/Black-

inferiority beliefs that apply to every aspect of social life.

Noble suggests that, if Black women were insecure about their self-concept, much of their anxiety was due to confusion and guilt concerning their roles. The absence of group goals threw Black women's personal lives into confusion. With no rationale for achievement except for material gain, they worried about how they were perceived as women at a time when their White peers were staying home and taking care of the children. They were more conscious of the fact that their accomplishments may stop them from getting married. Nevertheless, economic necessity kept them moving forward. [Ref 15:pp. 245-246]

Racial identity has a lot to do with providing a sense of personal and group integrity and worth. Van den Berghe suggests that the critical issue is not just oppression but status inequality. The Black culture is diverse with respect to levels of employment or unemployment, education, encounters with the police, economic status, and degree of family stability and identification with the life of White mainstream society. Being anchored in one's ethnic group, sharing common ideals, aspirations, and a sense of continuity and identity, is a basic human need. [Ref 16:p. 64]

Neither poor Blacks nor those who are socioeconomically successful are free of the resulting stigma, depression, paranoia, or self-hatred. No matter how privileged one is, one can always look backward and see the slavery and shackles of the past. Ahead lay generations of life without space, time, energy, mobility, bonding or identity to call one's own. [Ref 19:p. 80]

Bulhan, a psychologist, speaks of the "masks" that Blacks learn to wear for different occasions, the sensitivity to the needs and wishes of those in authority, the presenting of acceptable behavior and repressing of that which is contradictory and unacceptable, and the refining strategies for passive-aggressive behavior. [Ref 19:p. 83]

Webb found that Black female naval officers use several coping behaviors significantly more than their counterparts and that these coping behaviors are helpful within the naval work environment. [Ref 9:p. 136] Part of this results from the fact that there are relatively few Black female naval officers on active duty (795 in 1998).

Black female naval officers do not focus their lives and their friendships around their workplaces as frequently as do their White counterparts. And, they are more likely to develop support systems through the church and social or service groups than are their counterparts. Webb also found that, as a result of their perception of racial and sexual

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prejudice in the naval environment, Black female officers tend to seek closer contact with other Blacks in a command. This is done for psychological support and to determine whether other Blacks have experiences that are perceived as being related to their race. [Ref 9:pp. 139-140]

4. How Others View the Black Woman

The attitudes of Black women professionally are affected by how they are perceived by others. Jenkins suggests that White male employers often regard Black women as more "serious" than White women, because of their strong career motivation. Black women are also less likely to become involved in the sexual politics of the office. [Ref 19:p. 64] Jenkins suggests that Black women's success is due to the fact that they are perceived as less of a threat to White men. This perception has its disadvantages, for it indicates that whatever their abilities, Black women often progress so far and no farther. That is, they are seen as less threatening, or less apt than their male or White female peers to displace someone from the executive suite, because they are Black women. [Ref 19:p. 66]

Double discrimination can cut two ways for Black women. On the one hand, they are more likely to be unemployed or underemployed than are their White female counterparts. On the other hand, full-time Black women workers have exerted tremendous effort to overcome the barriers of race and sex

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and have made significant gains in economic activities. [Ref 15:p. 334]

Black women must fight for recognition as career women, resisting both sexism and racism. Black men often tell them that their success has occurred at the expense of their male counterparts. They may be subjected to the hostility of Black men who view the concerns of Black women about sexism as an indulgence more suited to White women. [Ref 15: p. 333]

All of this generates anger and resentment, with Black women "seeing" themselves as the least powerful and desirable group. A bitter self-hatred results, with women unable to see themselves as beautiful and thinking that they can be valued only for their tolerance, sexuality, and childbearing ability. (Ref 16:p. 246)

Hicks suggests that Black "career" women are often the "only one." Black women develop two separate personalities: a "Black one" and a "corporate one" (White one). Hicks defines this as "ethnic schizophrenia." Ethnic schizophrenia develops when black women try to ascribe to "their" standard of behavior, which means Black women have two ways of interacting with friends at home and at work. As a result, the Black woman has to prove herself to both groups over and over again. Black women find it twice as difficult to "get there" (be successful), and three times as

hard to "stay there," which makes them crazy. Being the "only one" is very stressful for Black women. Hicks also states that the better Black women are at their job, the more trapped they feel--trapped from a support system and stuck at a "glass ceiling" that keeps them being the "only one" in the corporation. [Ref 20: p. 74]

Webb states that a major organizational barrier for Black women relates to the fact that the organization itself does not value differences. Most large organizational systems, such as the armed services, are not designed for heterogeneity, but rather for homogeneity. Good organization or system fit means compatibility, likeness, or agreement. Initially, Black women may find it difficult to "fit in." The common assumption is that sameness is good for all of us. Even though the military has equal opportunity policies and training, it is one organization that strongly reflects this assumption. [Ref 9:p. 128]

Webb also finds that self-imposed pressure (i.e., working harder to prove oneself) is an important factor for Black female naval officers. They feel that being perceived as tokens for their race or gender raises their consciousness about self-presentations and professional decisions because they are representing not just themselves but their race and gender as well. [Ref 9:pp. 128-129]

III. METHODOLOGY

A. DATA COLLECTION

This thesis used information obtained through in-depth interviews to gather qualitative data regarding attitudes and opinions of Black female naval officers. The sample consisted of 18 Black female naval officers, ranging in seniority from Ensign to Captain. Because Black female naval officers are heavily concentrated in medical and support occupations, interviewees were from the Fleet Support, Supply, and Medical Service Corps communities. The sample population is described in more detail in Appendix A.

The sample of officers represented various professional backgrounds and levels of experience. Personal interviews were conducted and recorded on audiocassettes.

Most of the interviews were conducted in Washington, DC to obtain a sample that included a range of experience and rank. The sample population was knowledgeable and aware of current minority issues and initiatives being discussed within the Navy.

The interviewer engaged the interviewee in casual conversation prior to the interview. This allowed the subject to relax and talk more openly and sometimes be quite expressive.

The interviewees were comfortable exchanging their stories with the interviewer because of similar backgrounds, experiences, and a perceived understanding of those experiences. The interviewee, by virtue of her race (Black) and nearly 16 years of naval experience, both as an enlisted service person and as officer, was able to strike rapport with each of the subjects early in the interview.

B.   SURVEY QUESTIONS

The interview questions were open-ended and allowed the subjects to discuss any matters that they felt were related to the issue addressed.   The basic questions are presented below in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Interview Questions

- Why did you join the Navy?   Who was most influential in your decision to join?   What are the earliest memories you have about being interested in a military career? Did you have relatives in the military (mother, father, siblings, aunt, uncle, etc.)?
- What was your commissioning source? Tell me about your experiences at ROTC, OCS, Naval Academy, etc. What is it like being a Black female in the Navy?   What has it been like for you being the "only one"?
- Have you been able to maintain your identity as a black woman in the Navy?   Do you feel that you've had to compromise yourself in anyway, say to "fit" into the Navy's culture, to be successful or effective as a leader?
- What was your most rewarding experience as a Naval Officer?   Who was involved? What made it so rewarding? What has been your least rewarding experience?
- Are you married?   Do you have children?   How has the dual role officer and homemaker affected your naval career or assignments choices?

- Do you think you are treated fairly in decisions concerning your career, that is, with respect to your non-minority counterparts? Have you benefited or been hurt by your minority status? Explain.
- If you had 10 minutes with the CNO, what would you tell him concerning Black women in the Navy that we didn't cover in this interview?

The responses given by the interviewees sometimes required additional questioning to clarify or distinguish answers. This is common with respect to open-ended questions. The additional questions prompted by responses in earlier interviews sometimes became part of the base questions in later interviews. This was done to acquire additional opinions regarding similar issues from all interviewees. (See Appendix B for the interview protocol.)

C. DATA ANALYSIS AND THEME DEVELOPMENT

The data were compiled and then analyzed through the use of content analysis to identify trends and recurring issues related to Black female naval officers. These data were then grouped together with other data collected that contained similar issues.

The data groupings of recurring issues or topics were analyzed and themes were developed. The data analysis yielded 12 major themes (see Appendix C). These themes are presented in Chapter IV along with supporting justification. Each justification is reinforced with quotations that

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exemplify the opinions of the Black female officers interviewed.

IV. ANALYSIS

A. OVERVIEW

The data analysis yielded 12 prominent themes. These themes are presented and discussed below. Each theme is supported with quotations that exemplify the opinions of the Black female officers interviewed.

B. THEME I: MOST INTERVIEWEES WERE EXPOSED TO THE MILITARY AT A YOUNG AGE

1. Theme

Most of the officers interviewed were exposed to the military at a young age. Exposure generally included having a father, mother, uncle, or sibling(s) who served in the military. Service exposure included all branches, but service in the Army was the most prevalent.

2. Justification

Of the 18 Black female Naval officers interviewed, eight had mothers or fathers, four had siblings, and three had uncles who had served in a branch of the Armed Forces. The remaining three were not exposed to the military until high school or while attending college.

One interviewee whose father made the Army a career stated:

> My father was an Army officer, and when he first got in the Army, there were very few Black Army officers. He did ROTC and decided that he really

liked the Army life and wanted to do this. So,
for my entire life, from the time I was born--born
in an Army hospital to 21--I was an Army
dependent.

One interviewee was influenced by a number of family

members who had been in the service:

My family has a history of military service....
Two others were in the Navy but I guess I was kind
of influenced by the fact that everybody, almost
everybody had gone into the service and so it was
in my background, ...no one particular person
influenced my coming in the Navy.

An interviewee also had influences from family

members who had served in several branches of the

military and most were enlistees:

I only had one and that was my uncle, my Uncle
Robert at the time was like a captain in the Army
and he's the only other person that I know in my
family that was an officer in the military. The
other persons in my family older than me, were all
enlisted personnel....

Only one interviewee actually had a mother who had

served in the Armed forces:

My mother was in the Air Force and so there had
been--I had considered joining the Air Force at
one time but it was not something that I had
actually set out to do. ...Well, probably if I
have to say there was any one person who was most
influential, it would probably have to be my
mother. Mainly because she was in the Air Force
and at that time, there weren't very many African-
American women. Well, there were a few, but when
she came through--she was active duty during the
Korean War. At that time, it was not really very
acceptable for a young lady to join the service.
She talked to us a lot about her career and at the
time, women couldn't have kids, they couldn't get
married, they were encouraged to leave the service

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after they got married and had kids so she really didn't spend a lot of time in the service. But she enjoyed it and she always had positive things to say. She came from a family where she had six brothers who were in the military, different parts of the service. They were in the Navy, the Marine Corps, and mostly in the Army. She was the only girl in her family to join the services and it just wasn't something that her parents were very proud of but she was proud of her service and she kind of made us feel that the military was a good opportunity for women also. So she was probably the influential person.

An interviewee was influenced to join the military by her father and chose the Navy by default:

My father was in the Air Force and so I knew what the military life was like and so I already had a propensity to join. I already knew about the military so--and I liked what I knew. So that's why I joined the military. However, I wanted to join the Air Force because my father was in the Air Force but at the time they were not taking people with my degree, so I searched around the other services.

Another interviewee was also influenced by her father to join the military:

I have one uncle who's retired from the Army, but we weren't close, but I know he was in the Army and he would come home like maybe--I would see him like probably once every five years or so, and other than that, my father was in--back during the time of the Vietnam War, and he was drafted, and he just did his two years and then he got out, but he used to always talk to me about the military.

Two interviewees had relatives in the military that opposed their joining. One of these had an uncle in the Marine Corps who opposed her joining:

My uncle was in the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War. He felt that women in the Navy were

bed partners and that I was going to be somebody's
bed partner. Regardless, I went....

The other interviewee had a father who had been in the

Marine Corps and also opposed her joining:

> My dad was in the military briefly, Marine Corps
> for four years. He never pushed the military on
> the kids. In fact, when I announced that I was
> going in the military, he almost--well, I think he
> dropped a plate, he was washing dishes, and my mom
> almost passed out, so they weren't really
> expecting me to join the military....

C. THEME II: MOST INTERVIEWEES JOINED THE NAVY PRIMARILY FOR JOB OPPORTUNITIES, EDUCATION, AND TRAVEL

1. Theme

In the interviews conducted, four cited educational

opportunities as their primary reason for joining the Navy,

eight joined for job opportunities, two joined to travel,

and the remaining four joined for other reasons.

2. Justification

One interviewee joined because she needed money to

complete college:

> I joined the Navy because I ran out of money. I
> was going to college, ...and I had completed my
> freshman year. I was all set to register for the
> sophomore semester, and I was told that I owed
> money to the school, and I tried to get a loan,
> and I didn't--I wasn't able to get enough, so I
> basically ended up having to join. I shouldn't
> say I had to join, but I was 17 at the time, and
> no one was going to hire a 17 year-old to do
> anything.

An interviewee was attracted to the Navy primarily for a graduate degree:

> I joined the Navy for career opportunity and a graduate degree...I was looking for a job. I had no aspiration for the military. It was not something that I thought about a whole lot. They started calling me, the Navy did, and so I kind of entertained the job opportunities, and the master's degree program was what got my attention.

One interviewee cited several reasons for joining but education was her primary reason:

> I joined the Navy basically because I was interested in the Naval Academy. ...I had become interested in it, I guess, at the end of my sophomore year or early junior year, and I was interested in the opportunity, the experience, the education, the travel, guaranteed job....

An interviewee joined the Navy for an education and to get away from home.

This interviewee joined mainly because of the job opportunity:

> Job opportunity because where I was, ...and the job market wasn't that great. I was a math major and so I just felt that if I joined the Navy, got my commission in the Navy, I would immediately have a job.

This interviewee joined for the job and to travel:

> I wanted a job where I could travel because that's the one thing I did like, traveling. ...I'll talk to the Air Force and the Navy. So, I talked to these guys, and the Navy guy was really pretty persuasive about the different programs that they had. I would only owe them four years, ...and plus I'd get my own money, get to travel a little bit....

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This interviewee actually chose the Navy over the Marine Corps because of the job opportunities:

> And when I decided upon a commission, I decided to change my commission from a Marine commission to the Navy commission basically because the Navy had a larger PAO program and I was interested in public affairs at that time.

An interviewee wanted to join the Navy since she was five years old:

> I joined the Navy because it was something that I always wanted to do every since I was five years old, I knew I wanted to be in the military. I followed this dream even in high school. I was in the Marine Corps Junior ROTC and it was just likely for me to follow suit. I had a mentor who was the CO of the NRO--the Marine Corps Junior ROTC. He basically told me one day, I was looking at going right into the Marine Corps out of high school, and he said you need to go through an officer program because you perform at that level already. And this was in high school.

A senior-ranking interviewee did not have a specific reason for wanting to join the Navy, either. She had always possessed a strong desire to join the Navy:

> I felt a calling to be in the Navy. It was something I had to do. I used to want to be a lawyer and in my senior--junior year, going to lunch, I saw the fruit stand outside of the cafeteria, and I said got to be--got to be in the Navy.

This senior-ranking interviewee joined by chance. Her brother was supposed to join so she had planned to meet him at the Recruiting station for moral support. Her brother never showed up and she ended up joining instead.

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D. THEME III: ALL INTERVIEWEES FELT THAT THEY HAD TO WORK HARDER THAN THEIR COUNTERPARTS TO BE SUCCESSFUL

1. Theme

All of the interviewees felt that they had to work harder than did their White counterparts just to be recognized. This was a voluntary disclosure and the interviewees revealed it at different stages during the interviews. This perspective is supported in related literature. Being "tokens," Black women are burdened with representing both their race and their gender, and not just themselves.

A senior-ranking interviewee, with over 20 years in the Navy, felt that Black women are a "twofers":

> Well, let me see. I think that as a Black woman in the Navy, people have a misconception. If you're a Black woman, you're a twofer. That is, the Navy gets two for the price of one and somehow you're going to end up with more opportunities. Because the Navy has this quota system where they're going to pick you because if they have an opportunity to get two for the price of one, then you're going to get picked... You have it better than everybody else.

> What happens, I think, in some situations...a lot of times people don't worry about your career because they figure you're going to be selected anyway. Therefore, they may rank you lower than they may rank somebody else because they figure that you're going to make it just because you're a black woman. Being a Black woman is going to give you kind of a leg up on everyone else. So what happens...your performance is considered to be substandard and you're not going to be successful because people keep thinking that this is somehow going to be to your advantage... It turns out, we end up losing more people that way because they get ranked lower...

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You can't do the same thing that everybody else does because if you do the same thing, it will not be considered to be competitive. So you have to make sure that whatever you do, it has to be so far ahead of everybody else that there's no question in anybody's mind that you're the best....

The most junior interviewee felt that she was under a

"magnifying glass":

I feel that I have to work harder than my peers. I just think that being, well, there are other Black female officers in the command but I think me being the only Ensign female, Black officer or Ensign Black female.... I think that if I do something wrong as opposed to the other Ensigns... it's going to be noticed a lot quicker. I think they're going to tend to be like this--like you did this wrong, you did that wrong, so I have to always be aware.

Comments from other interviewees support these

perspectives:

Interviewee stated:

Every time you go in, you have to prove yourself, and it's almost as though you would think that okay, so I've proven myself here, the next time I go someplace, I should already go in with certain credentials and be accepted for who I am as a professional. But what I find is that you then have to prove to another group of people all over again that you're capable of doing the job and that somehow you didn't just slip through the cracks. So, that to me is a challenge....

Interviewee stated:

I don't feel that I have been hurt by my minority status but I have been disappointed. I feel that I work harder than they have ...and I don't feel like I've been rewarded for my work.

Interviewee stated:

You go in there and you show you know what you're
doing.   They could be looking for signs that
you're feeling intimidated signs that you're not
willing to socialize or whatever, but if they
don't see those signs, if you're giving them the
opportunity to show friendship, professionalism,
they're going to respond with that....

Interviewee stated:

I've had to work much harder than my
counterparts...you know, people don't deal with
the sensitivity of the prejudice in a real world
sense you will always have under the table
uncertainties about different races, different
creeds, for whatever reasons.   Until people deal
with their insecurities, their own skeletons,
you'll always have to deal with that.   Like I say,
when I walk in the door, I'm already pegged.   If
you're already telling me I'm going to fail
because of this and because of that, you've
already--you're voicing your prejudices to me now.
But I'm not the one that is going to have to deal
with that.   I'm going to turn it around and make
you deal with it because I don't have to....

Interviewee stated:

Most of the time, I don't even think about it, to
be honest with you.   ...But then a lot of times,
when you walk in the door, you're a double
minority, so you have the racial things that
people have to get over, and you have the female
biases that you have to get over....   A lot of
times, the first--when you're first starting a
job, it's about proving that you're supposed to be
where you are and being uncomfortable.   After
awhile, after you prove yourself basically, it's a
non-issue.   I don't feel Black female, I just feel
like I'm a naval officer, after awhile.   But then
there always a few people that will remind you in
subtle ways.

Interviewee stated:

You know, sometimes, maybe it was my own feelings
but I felt that I had to perform....   That I had
to do well and if I didn't do well that I was

going to be feeding into some kind of stereotype that other people might have.... It wasn't overt but I suspect from time to time there were feelings...there may be undercurrents that Blacks weren't going to do as well, weren't going to perform as well. There again, I had to constantly be on alert to perform well, to counter that kind of undercurrent that might be there.

Interviewee stated:

I have run into problems with being, at every job it seems like, in being a woman and also problems with being a Black. And most of the time, you can't distinguish when one of those problems starts and the other one ends. And I find that being a female, being a Black that I'm not given the benefit of the doubt. If I were a white male, I would be given the benefit of the doubt but as a Black female, I find that every command that I go to I have to prove that I'm okay, that I can lead, that I know what I'm doing. And so it's a struggle to gear up faster, to prove that I know what I'm doing. And that happens, like I said, at every command. I run into some blatant racism.

Interviewee stated:

The disadvantage in being a minority is that every time I go to a unit, I have to prove myself. That is the disadvantage but I somehow always manage to prove myself....

Interviewee stated:

I always feel like I have to work twice as hard...harder than my peers do. As far as my performance goes and also as far as being accepted, not that I look to be accepted, but all of that affects your--the grades in some way, shape, form or fashion on your fitness reports. If it wasn't for the fitness report, I could care less about being accepted, but that all just comes into play.

Interviewee stated:

You walk into a job, as a Black woman, you have to prove yourself, but you bloom where you're planted.

Interviewee stated:

I've always been the only Black female, sometimes the only female, and fighting stereotypes, they don't think you're smart, they don't think you're professional, they don't think you know anything, they don't think you can lead, they don't think you really know it. So you find yourself going in and saying okay, you're kind of taking it easy and trying to feel the area.... You have to always prove yourself and prove yourself worthy; it's not taken up front that you're going--you're squared away.... You don't have an advantage like most people have when they walk through the door, you have to work for that and make people feel comfortable with you.

Interviewee stated:

Both active duty and while I was at the Academy, I felt that I had to prove myself.... While I was at the academy, I was in charge of the Command Assessment Team, and I would get the written portion of the surveys. I ran across at least ten midshipmen statements that said if you're Black and a female, you have it made at the Academy. But I didn't feel like that. I was one of four Black females that graduated in my class, and in the class behind me, there was only one. ....To me, I felt like I was watched, like under a microscope and if something went wrong, I felt like I would ...singled out... Not that I was doing anything wrong, but I just felt that it was easy to pin something on me. ...When I got to my first command, I felt that I had to prove myself all over again....

Interviewee stated:

You're a female, and that's a--I'm going to say a strike against you. Then you come in and you're a black female and that's like you have to do--you have to work twice--not even twice as hard anymore, you have to triple, quadruple your work effort to prove yourself and I don't think you should have to do that. They should value each of us as a capable person, forget the color of my skin and forget my gender. Just evaluate me on my person. I know for some people, that is hard to do because there are some people who will always

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look at you as a female and question your abilities. If you don't perform quadruple better than a white male you won't get a good fitness report and I just think that is wrong.

Interviewee stated:

I think you come in with a little bit less respect, always having to try to prove yourself, I think people have low expectations of you, I think sometimes there are preconceived notions. One of the things I heard that black females are supposed to be emotional people....

Interviewee stated:

I've always felt that every tour, no matter how senior I am, I have to prove myself again. I can't walk in the door on an equal par with someone who isn't without having to be--without having to second guess...or even if it isn't verbalized, you know it's there. You know it's there, ...even if it isn't, based on experiences, that's my perception, and if it's a paranoia, oh well, I've dealt with it that way....

E. THEME IV: MOST INTERVIEWEES FELT THAT THEY HAD TO LEAVE A PART OF THEIR IDENTITY HOME TO ADAPT TO THE DOMINANT CULTURE TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE NAVY

1. Theme

As tokens, Black women also feel that they have to adapt to the way the majority operates to gain peer acceptance. Being a token means high visibility, and to "fit in" means behaving "naturally" in the majority's environment.

2. Justification

One interviewee had a White mentor who had helped her throughout her career:

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I would call it learning to play the game and learning from others how to play the game. ...I have a white senior officer who's a mentor to me and she commented to me that she wants to help other blacks and especially other black females but she doesn't know how to go about it. ...You know we got to a point where she asked me, what is it that I can do to break that, to break into something like that. I told her, I said the best thing that you can do for me is to teach me how to play the game. You guys invented it, teach me how to play it. You know that's the only thing that you can really do for me at this point. ...I would say that maybe I've gotten a little smarter and I've learned how to play the game a little bit better but on my terms. In a lot of cases...you have no choice but to play it on their terms.

A senior-ranking interviewee felt that, "when in Rome, do as the Romans do":

In order to be successful you have to, when in Rome do what the Romans do, and so I think that we have to assimilate to a certain degree to try to adjust and to adapt.

A mid-grade interviewee also felt the same way:

I do believe when in Rome, do as the Romans, I do believe that. I don't believe--I mean it would be foolish if you're a minority, to think that the majority is going to assimilate towards you. That is unrealistic. So, yeah, I do change some of the ways I do things and yeah, I make an effort to assimilate, and so some might consider that compromising, but I don't have a problem with that.

A junior-ranking interviewee felt as if she is "standing on the outside looking in":

I described myself as being a black female in the Navy to someone once as the person who walks by a display window and I'm in the environment but I'm looking through the window and I can't get in is the way that I feel most of the time. I'm outside of the window--I'm in the environment, I'm accepted, I'm almost accepted but I'm looking

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through a window at everyone else moving around
doing things naturally. But for me, it's a big
struggle. You know, I'm always kind of like
looking behind my back and I'm always
wondering.... I feel like--a great deal of the
time, I feel as if I have to make myself fit in.
There are certain things that I can't say--that
I'm very careful about my English usage, etc.

Another interviewee had been in the Navy one-and-a-half

years and she was not yet certain what was expected of her:

I know in the back of my mind that there are
certain expectations of me and I have a certain
role that I'm supposed to fill.... I guess in the
wardroom environment, I am not too comfortable
because there are not that many JO's.... I was
told that I was too much to myself and that I
wasn't social enough. ...I just don't totally
feel comfortable in that environment and so I have
to learn to kind of break out of a shell and kind
of learn how to mingle with different
personalities and know what it is that they expect
me to do.

One interviewee would not compromise, but she learned

to adapt to whatever climate that she was in:

I won't compromise what I do is I learn the
climate of the folks and learn to adapt, ...I'll
go from ebonics to business and
professionalism.... You just learn how to change
your mode....

A senior-ranking officer also commented on the use of

language as a measure of professionalism:

I know, we have our own culture...there are ways
that we express ourselves to each other. It's not
slang, but a vernacular that we can use that they
maybe won't understand, ...or may be viewed as not
being professional. ...It's hard to articulate
what I'm saying, but I'm sure other Blacks
understand. So sometimes I stop myself from
responding the way that is natural for me when I'm
in a relaxed mode to--and resort to making sure I
always use the Queen's English.

One mid-grade interviewee learned to adapt over a period of time:

> Initially, working in an environment where it's predominately all White male was very different, and this is the first job I've ever had. So, initially it was a little intimidating to be working in an environment with all-white males, but as the years went on, and I matured...I guess you start to get used to it, you start to get accustomed to that...that this is the way it's going to be....

Another mid-grade interviewee stated:

> I think if you want to be successful in the Navy, you have to do some kind of adaptation anyway, I think a lot of people who come in have to--you have to fit into the Navy culture....

As one interviewee stated:

> I've been in a lot of environments where it's been mostly white, even college and so you start getting into the kind of cultural things that are part of the majority in order to ...to make friends....

Another interviewee stated:

> I go to a lot of the social functions that the command has...a lot of that has to be your responsibility whether you want to do it or not.... It was something I was taught to do...I socialize with the command at functions but I make my own friends through NNOA and things like that.

F. THEME V: ALL INTERVIEWEES MAINTAINED THEIR BLACK IDENTITY BY HAVING STRONG SUPPORT SYSTEMS OUTSIDE THE NAVY

1. Theme

In almost every case, the interviewees stated that they were able to cope with the racism and sexism in their lives primarily by having strong support systems, feeling good

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about the roles they are performing, and being reinforced by positive self-images. There are no formal training sessions dedicated to teaching the management of racial and sexual prejudice, harassment, or discrimination. Thus, Black female naval officers turn to professional groups such as the National Naval Officer's Association (NNOA); and, through shared knowledge and experience, they learn how to deal with racism and sexism.

2. Justification

One mid-grade interviewee stated:

> I've always tried to make sure I had some interactions with my, you know, my own race just to make sure that I did keep...that identity....

A junior-ranking interviewee was the only Black female onboard her ship, so she spent off-duty time with Black male officers:

> I hung out with Black males...I didn't want to associate with White females...because I like to identify with my own. I work with White folks all day, and then when I have a chance to just socialize, I want to be with my own, I migrate there. It's just an identity "thing" for me.

NNOA played a major part in the life of this junior-ranking interviewee:

> Just making friends with other people in the area, through NNOA, or people in the neighborhood that I used to go out with. I tried very hard--I always try hard to mix my company with civilians and military wherever I go, so I--I've got my--that satisfaction, that social thing....

A junior-ranking interviewee was also a very active member of NNOA:

> To release my stress...we had a very active NNOA chapter in my first tour. And we had regular meetings, and I was on the base, so it was really easy for me to see other Black officers. And I had some good friends there that I could talk to and share experiences.

Another junior-ranking interviewee stated:

> I separate my personal life from my Navy life totally. So when I go home, if there's something culturally I want to do--if I go to African dance class, if I'm just amongst other African-Americans, just joking about things, common experiences that we have shared or common problems or whatever it is. I can just--that's my opportunity to feel free and feel comfortable about my culture.

A senior-ranking interviewee stated that she went out into the community to find people who looked like her:

> My first tour was very depressing. For me, it was one of the most uncomfortable experiences in my life because I had gone to an all-Black school.... The instructors in our ROTC unit who were of varying ethnic backgrounds but, no one prepared me for the Navy. I didn't know anything about the Navy and I certainly didn't know that the Navy was practically lily White. ...I'd never been in the work force, and I go there and there is no one that I felt I could relate to, and they treated me as if I was an oddity, so that didn't help. That got better the first year. But initially, it was a lonely existence, and the way I coped, luckily I was in Atlanta, Georgia. On the weekends, I just became a whole different person and went to find the kind of folk that I was comfortable with ...and enjoyed myself that way.

G. THEME VI: MOST INTERVIEWEES CONCENTRATED ON SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT TO COPE WITH PERSONAL OBSTACLES

1. Theme

Black female naval officers develop strong bonds with community members, church members and their families as a coping behavior. Black people have historically been spiritual people. For Blacks, concentration on their spiritual substance and engaging in prayer are the forces that have historically, successfully overcome their personal obstacles. Also, spiritual development allows Blacks to appraise a situation with more optimism. Church is an effective and widely used coping strategy.

2. Justification

A junior-ranking interviewee stated that her belief in God was helping her to maintain a sense of personal wellbeing:

> I believe in God and I stay close to God. I think that the beginning of my identity is with God. I know that everything that I have and I'm talking-- I'm not talking about material things--I'm talking about those things that are innate to me, being an intelligent person, being a good person, wanting to do good things for other people, etc., etc. I realize that those all came through the grace of God and I stay close to that. When I was in Hawaii, I joined the church immediately and I stayed in the church. I build my friendships that way. My friends are people who go to church and who love the Lord and I'm instantly attracted to those people....

Another junior-ranking interviewee also stated that she

gained strength from her belief in God:

> Well, I go to church, and I have to pray and I
> have to read my Bible, so that's my outlet...and I
> like watching TV, too.

A junior-ranking interviewee stated:

> When I go to church...that's my opportunity to
> feel free and feel comfortable about my culture.

A senior-ranking interviewee was active in both the

church and her community:

> I get involved in the community and I get involved
> in my church. Those are the kinds of things that
> give me another perspective because I think that
> if you just live your life, you know, the Navy is
> like the center of your entire existence. Then I
> think you don't have much personality. It's that
> you really need to have more of a life outside the
> Navy in order to be a whole person.

Another senior-ranking interviewee enjoyed art and

crafts and spending time with her children:

> I paint, I make dolls, I just indulge in my
> artwork and I have kids so I think that that's a
> big--it gives me a life after the Navy. So I
> have--my life is not just confined to the time
> that I spend in the Navy. I have other activities
> that I do.

A mid-grade interviewee stated that she spent time with

family and friends:

> I have a husband and I have a child and so those
> are the things that help me relieve stress and
> exercising, of course, when I have the chance to
> do that but I just say to myself, I have something
> outside of this. I have a family, I have friends,
> I have relatives outside of this job.

Another mid-grade interviewee kept the Navy and her personal life separate:

> I think one of the things that sustained me in this organization is the fact that not all of my friends are Navy. In fact, a great majority of my friends aren't Navy, and I go home a lot and spend a lot of time in New York, and so most people will tell you that they don't even know I'm in the Navy because that's not my entire life. I think you have to have other interests, other friends, and other goals.

H. THEME VII: MANY INTERVIEWEES STATED THAT THEIR MOST REWARDING EXPERIENCE WAS BEING ABLE TO HELP SUBORDINATES GROW PROFESSIONALLY

1. Theme

Black female naval officers stated that their greatest intrinsic reward involved helping others, Black and non-Black, achieve their goals.

2. Justification

When interviewees were asked to disclose their most rewarding experience as a naval officer, most responses involved helping sailors grow professionally.

A junior-ranking interviewee stated:

> Okay, my single most rewarding experience has been in helping other people. I really don't have a single most rewarding experience because I've tried to help someone at every duty station that I've gone to. My first duty station was the Navy Media Center. I was the officer in charge of the school partnership, of our Partners in Excellence, but I was the leader on that and we adopted a small predominantly black school off _____ Parkway and they really needed help. And one of the things I did there was I organized a Christmas program.

A junior-ranking interviewee, a prior enlistee, stated:

Being a Mustang Officer and watching my enlisted
crew get awards, get accepted to officer programs,
getting educated, and just moving on with their
life, it's not me, it's about them, they are so
important to me, you bring up the rear.

A mid-grade interviewee felt that she was most

effective as a detailer:

Being a detailer because I actually felt like I
was doing something to help people and then as an
OIC PSD...I was actually responsible for...people
and responsible for people's records, money....
So any job where I'm actually helping other
people, I think I enjoy that and those two jobs, I
enjoyed both of them. They were both rewarding.

Another mid-grade interviewee stated that she enjoyed

helping people advance in their careers:

Helping people, black and white, in their careers.
In the teaching environment, when I see folks,
particularly black kids that everybody else will
seem to have given up on...in some kind of way, I
break through to them, that's probably my most
rewarding experience. ...A football player at the
Naval Academy just did not have it academically,
but I beat him up, and he's an Intel officer doing
well.

Yet another mid-grade interviewee also enjoyed helping

sailors:

My most rewarding experience as a naval officer is
primarily watching people grow. In every job that
I've ever had in the Navy, I can always glean an
opportunity where a sailor has learned from me,
has basically taken the tools of being given an
opportunity to lead. I believe that you need to
empower your people, I mean they are all smart,
they wouldn't be in the Navy if they were not
smart and weren't capable of doing their jobs, and
sometimes we limit them. I'm the type of person
that gives them the opportunity to excel.

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One junior-ranking interviewee stated:

> Helping other people...I really don't have a
> single most rewarding experience because I've
> tried to help someone at every duty station....

I. THEME VIII: ALL INTERVIEWEES HAD FACED ADVERSITIES, BUT STAYED AND GENERALLY ENJOYED BEING IN THE NAVY

1. Theme

Interviews conducted for this thesis' consisted *only* of Black women who stayed in the Navy despite any perceived problems in adapting to the organizational culture. Interviews were not conducted with Black female naval officers who left the Navy. As the theme suggests, with few exceptions, the interviewees enjoyed their careers and planned to someday retire from the Navy.

2. Justification

A senior-ranking interviewee had been in the Navy over 20 years and she greatly enjoyed the camaraderie and the experience that the Navy offers:

> I guess I have to say that throughout my career,
> I've met some wonderful people....   I would say
> that just the camaraderie of getting through the
> Navy and being successful and people who have
> helped you to be successful. I think that that's
> probably been the best part of my Navy experience.
> Not to mention the fact that I think that the Navy
> does prepare people for life when you go onto
> another civilian sector. A lot of people I know
> who are in the Navy right now have left and they
> are doing extremely well in the civilian sector
> because of the preparation that they got just for
> being in the Navy. It teaches you organizational
> skills, scheduling, just managing your time...it
> also gives you a lot of responsibility at a very,
> very young age.

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A mid-grade interviewee stated:

At some point, I'm sure life holds another career for me and one morning, I will wake up and say it's time to move on, but right now, I'm still-- I'm here because I'm still having fun. There are some things that I want to--I want to influence. I want to influence the Navy's direction and where they're going with information technology management or whatever. I think I'm a role model in a lot of ways. So, I'm giving of myself in that sense.... You know, the Navy is a great stepping stone for a lot of things in life. I'm not saying that they're going to stay there, but you've got to start somewhere. And where else are you going to start where you walk in the door and you're given a job, and you've got to figure it out, and it's amazing that you see people rise to the challenge, they do it all the time. I can honestly say I'll walk away from my naval career knowing that I can do a lot of great things.

Another mid-grade interviewee stated:

I think what makes me stay is that I don't want to be a quitter. That's one of the reasons. Another reason is I think that the experiences I get from the Navy I would not be able to get with all the things that can possibly be wrong with the Navy, I could not get this experience somewhere else. The type of leadership experience that I have received the education that I've received. I've gone to the Naval Postgraduate School. I've gone to Air Commanding Staff College. I've gone to different leadership training. I just don't think that there would probably be another corporation who could duplicate what the Navy has done for me.

Yet another mid-grade interviewee was still satisfied with being in the Navy:

I'm still satisfied in the job because I like doing different things, I do have a tendency to get bored doing the same thing all the time. So, it does offer me a variety of different assignments. And I have to say I've learned a lot, I don't know if I would have learned as much in a normal corporate job. The traveling has been good. And I'm--I still like it, I'm still

you made O-5, did you get these little letters and what did your letters say. Why aren't you responsible? Why am I the only one who's responsible for this, that can't be, and Admiral Bowman said he wants the situation to change, the Navy has to make it change. And the only way you can do that is to stop depending on us to do your work for you....

A mid-grade interviewee was skeptical about the Navy's minority recruiting plan for the officer corps:

Great that the Navy is talking the talk but what is the Navy really doing here? For instance, you hear the Navy recently talking about 12-12-5, 12% blacks, 12% Hispanics, 5% Asian-Pacific in their recruiting realm and then they're afraid to say 12-12-5 and then they're afraid that okay, this is going to look like a quota. Okay, and then you have people saying well, we don't need the Navy to mirror society. Why not? In order for you to attract minorities, minorities have to see minorities in the service, to want to go. I saw my father in the military.... You know, shut up or do something about it. Do something about the recruiting or do something about--do some studies, how are we doing, do you care? I mean, when is the last time they've done a minority study of any kind? They've done studies on women, sexual harassment, rape, those kinds of things, but, you know, not many studies that I know of and I could be way off base about how are minorities doing in the military, what are the problems, are there any problems?

K. THEME X: MOST INTERVIEWEES BELIEVED THAT THEY WERE EXPECTED TO "REPRESENT" THEIR RACE

1. Theme

The interviewees felt that they were expected to be an authority on all Black issues and to handle issues pertaining to Black subordinates whether they were responsible for those individuals or not.

2. Justification

A senior-ranking interviewee had to intervene on behalf

of a junior-grade Black female officer:

> Braids have always been kind of a thing...even
> though the military actually has rules regarding
> wearing braids, you very rarely see women officers
> wearing braids even though the rules say that you
> can. ...Uniform Regs say that you're allowed to
> wear braids but culturally, it's not considered
> acceptable.... Not long ago, there was a
> lieutenant here who wore braids and she was
> counseled by her supervisor about professionalism.
> I...had...to talk to her supervisor about being
> professional and indicated that Navy uniform
> regulations say it's okay. So as long as it's
> within regulations, then it's okay for her to wear
> braids.... The fact that she even thought it was
> necessary to mention it, to me was, I consider
> that to be racist. She may not have thought about
> it as racist, but I think it is whenever something
> that is part of our culture...somehow is not
> considered to be acceptable because you don't like
> it.... You shouldn't have to make a choice but we
> still do and until society at large changes, I
> think that's always going to be the case.

An interviewee felt as though she was representing the

Black race when she attended functions:

> We have to be representatives of our race...it's
> like you're the outsider, that's--and I'm not
> going to say there aren't some people who want to
> socialize with you, but for the most part, it's
> like oh, yeah, we have a black female in the
> organization.... If you do anything, it's like
> oh, everybody knows who it is. I mean you're not-
> -you can't be anonymous, you stand out, and you
> hate when you walk into a room and you know that
> you're the only person in there representative of
> your color.... You have to ask yourself why? Why
> is it that you're the only one in that particular
> command, you should be able--you should have more
> people that look like you--it's very unsettling,
> it makes you wonder what management is doing.

A senior-ranking interviewee did not want to be considered the authority on Black sailors:

> I don't mind getting involved and I will help people who need help but as far as I'm concerned, the fact that I'm black has nothing to do with that. I mean, if there's an officer out there who is having a problem or an enlisted person who's having a problem and it has something to do with race, I'm not a race expert and I hate it when people think that I'm an expert on black people. ...I'm an expert on myself. That's it. And I hate it when people try to put you into a billet that is designated as a minority billet. ...It drives me nuts.

A senior-ranking interviewee had to intervene for a Black and a Jewish sailor:

> I had one...CO, and I'm going to say it was because of his upbringing, he wasn't exposed to a lot of Black people and so I guess his idea of getting along with everybody is to do this what he thought was a stereotypical Black thing. He was into lingo, I mean he'd see me standing in a hall, and come up and say, "hey, blood, what's going down." ...And in fact, it got so bad, I had a Black petty officer who worked for me, he wanted him to play basketball, and this guy said no, I don't play basketball, I am very clumsy, I trip over my feet, I don't play basketball. And you shouldn't assume just because I'm a tall Black man that I can. Oh, of course, you can, we'll teach you, we can do it. I mean we can't let this height go to waste. And then he went around and told everybody, I can't believe this guy does not play basketball. I mean don't they all play basketball. The petty officer came to me and said, "I am highly offended, and ma'am, if you don't do something, I'm just going to have to do something myself." And I said, well, let me go and talk to him and see what's up. And I went to his office and I said, sir, you've got a problem on your hands. I've had several Black petty officers come to me and said they don't appreciate the way you treat them, this business of trying to use the "lingo" ...we are in the military, we don't use this kind of language. And to assume that

somebody is going to play basketball and then get upset when they don't want to, and basically threaten the guy by saying it's going to affect his eval -- no, no, no, we can't do that. And he just looked at me, and he said, "What do you mean they don't like me, I've done everything I can to get them to like me." I said, this is not the way to do it, and I said and it's not just the Black ones, I've had a couple of Jewish ones come up to me and say that you have said things like "oy vay", and things that you think are typically Jewish, and I said, you can't do that. I said now, I'm going to give you the benefit of the doubt, and assume it's because of your upbringing. ...It is true, oh, God, yes, I was raised in Idaho, I didn't even see a Black person until I got in the Navy....

A Commanding Officer attempted to make this senior interviewee the Minority Recruiter:

I have been--when I was in recruiting, I have been expected to help out the recruiting district by getting more Black officers in, and I was the only Black officer there, too, and they went to great pains to find out whether I was Black or not. My sponsor called me and said oh, the CO wanted to let you know that he's really glad you're coming, and he's really glad you're black. My first thought was wait a minute, how did you know that, I mean what did you do, did you actually go to somebody and ask? ...When I got there, they wanted me to--I was supposed to go to New Haven to be an OIC of a Naval Recruiting Processing Station, and they wanted me to stay in Albany to be the minority affairs officer.... I said to him, no, I specifically asked for the job in New Haven, I do not want to live in Albany. That job in New Haven is a department head job which is why I asked for it, if you don't want me to have it, we can just get on the phone and call my detailer now and divert my household goods because I don't want to do this....

L. THEME XI: ALL INTERVIEWEES EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION IN THE NAVY

1. Theme

Interviewees reported numerous instances of gender and racial discrimination when asked about their general experiences in the Navy. Most interviewees had experienced some sort of discrimination, although it was not a dominant element in their career experiences.

2. Justification

Black female naval officers in a traditionally White male environment are categorized as "status discrepant." As a result, "others" do not always accept them in the workplace. This non-acceptance seems to be manifested not only subtly, but also blatantly in the comments by Black female officers below:

A junior-ranking interviewee had this to say about her experiences at the Naval Academy:

> I think my personal experiences are very unique. I can't say that all Black females go through the same thing I went through, but it just so happened that I was in a company that was very anti-female and anti-minority...there were five females in my class in that company and we were just getting hazed. I know that the term wasn't allowed. There was "no hazing allowed" but I mean they would never physically touch us. It was just more of a mental verbal harassment, particularly with me. And I know several times I tried to put up grievances, but somehow or another they always got stopped.... I wound up getting into a physical altercation with my roommate who happened to be White. Up until that point, we were best of

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friends.   ...Tension from our company…affected the
roommate environment and we took it out on each
other physically...   That was something...not
only split the company but it split the school and
it hurt me professionally at the Academy....   But
during the course of the fight, there was--she
made a racial slur....   She called me a nigger.
After the fight was over, she walked away and
called me a nigger and it hurt me because I
thought she was my friend but all along I realized
that's how she viewed me and I brought that up in
all the legal things that came out of it.   I mean,
there were so many equal opportunity people
getting involved from the NAACP, that my dad had
coming in and things like that....   It just made
the rest of my time there a little rough.

A   junior-ranking   interviewee   actually   experienced

sexual harassment during her *entry interview*:

One interview that I had for a nomination from the
state, and I was actually asked in the interview, was I
joining or was I trying to go to the Naval Academy so
that I could find my future husband, and quit the
Academy, and marry him and leave.   I told him that I
thought I was mature and attractive enough to find a
man on my own, and not have to go to school just to
find one and quit....   When I think about that
interview, it really upsets me but I am glad that I
pushed through....

A mid-grade interviewee had a bad experience while in

Officer Candidate School:

I had a senior chief, a master chief who taught
piloting and navigation who was basically a bigot
and his job, it seemed to me, was to make it
difficult for me.   Anytime I went there for help,
he acted like I wasn't there.   I would bring a
white person with me to get him to kind of
recognize that I needed help too and they would
say oh, I need help too.   So the only way I would
get help is I would bring, this sounds bizarre but
this is what happened, I would bring a white
person with me and look over. He would not even
acknowledge me.   During the times I would take
tests, he would stare at me and stand by my desk
and do things like that and I thought it was just

me at first. But by the time the academic review
board came around, I found out later that this guy
was really on notice and he was supposedly an
alcoholic and he did have racial problems,
bigotry, etc. and they finally just got rid of the
man after that. But that just enhanced my
trouble--when I first got into piloting and
navigation, I was making 4.0's on tests. And as
time went on with him, he just kind of made me
very, very uncomfortable, would not help me, etc.,
etc. until I was just downhill.

A senior-ranking interviewee and the other two Blacks

in her company were consistently ranked low on peer

evaluations:

When I was at OCS ...it just seems strange to me
that, you know, they did the peer ranking but
three Blacks always ended up at the bottom and for
all of us to end up at the bottom seemed to be
just a little bit--it was not a coincidence...that
we never were ranked at the top. I think that you
kind of you suck it in, you sort of expect it and
to be honest, I would have been surprised if any
of us had ended up at the top. It just didn't
happen.

A junior-ranking interviewee and other Blacks in her

company were ranked low on performance evaluations at the

Naval Academy:

My first year at the academy was an eye-opener
because I remember being ranked high performance-
wise in my company, at mid-terms, but by the end
of the semester, I was ranked low, and I remember
asking about it. There were three Black fourth-
classman in the company and we were all ranked
low. I was told that my performance was
consistent but others increased their performance
from low to high and they wanted to recognize them
for their achievement. The next semester, the
same thing happened. I remember being really
upset and the company officer wouldn't speak to
any of us about our evaluations.... Another
incident happened in my sophomore year when an
upperclassman asked a plebe what "BN" stood for.

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The plebe answered by saying that it stood for
____navigator and the upperclassman said it stood
for boat nigger. He was reported but nothing
happened to him and he never apologized.

A mid-grade interviewee was informed by the
Commanding Officer that she was going to have problems
when she checked aboard:

> I remember one instance when I was going into my
> second tour in the Navy and I walked in and the
> skipper, in his in-brief basically said I was
> going to have problems because I was Black and
> because I was a female. And I immediately
> proceeded to tell him, no, I wasn't going to have
> problems, he may have problems, because I've been
> black and female all my life. And I'm proud of
> who I am, I think I'm a very responsible, caring
> individual, and I think I'm a born leader. I
> believe in what the military stands for and I live
> to those values.

A Commanding Officer also set the stage for a senior-
ranking interviewee during an in-brief when she was an
Ensign:

> When I was an Ensign, my Captain told me straight
> out, I have never worked with a Black officer, I
> have never worked with a Black female officer, I
> don't know how this happened and I don't like it.
> Welcome to the Navy.

A senior-ranking interviewee felt that Blacks were not
always offered the best jobs by the detailers:

> There are jobs that we never hear about ever and
> there are programs we never hear about unless we
> tell each other. We (Blacks) share that network
> with each other and it makes you wonder.... You
> call the detailer and they have information that
> you never get told or you call with information,
> and they say oh, yes, we do have that. And I
> believe it's done differently for others.

A mid-grade interviewee claimed to had experienced both

blatant and subtle forms of racism and sexism:

> I ran into some blatant racism. My very first
> command as an ensign I had a leader who made
> racist statements to me and also, chauvinistic,
> sexual harassment type comments to me and to the
> people that I worked with. Because there were more
> women, he would do things like refer to us as his
> harem and tell us that we had to go to happy hour
> every Friday which was in an environment with a
> couple of women and hundreds of aviators and he
> would introduce us at the club as his harem, his
> women and those kinds of things. He actually
> ...at a command function ...I didn't want to go in
> the first place so I came a little bit late ...And
> so his question to me was what happened, did your
> trick get done late? This is in front of the
> whole wardroom. ...He also at a picnic said, he
> sat next to me, he says you know, ...I'm Jewish
> and we Jews used to make fools of you Blacks when
> I was a kid. ...Those are the extreme cases and
> then there are, of course, the subtle cases of
> racism or sexism or chauvinism and those kinds of
> things. As I said throughout my career, those
> kinds of things have happened....

One senior-ranking officer was talking to the person

that she was relieving on the phone and was mistaken for a

White officer:

> I've had people tell me I don't talk like a Black
> person. My second command, I called my sponsor to
> get some information...we chatted for a while.
> ...I got to Hawaii and ...she met me at the
> airport, and when I got off the plane, she had a
> sign up with my name on it, I went over and I said
> hi, and she blinked, ...you didn't tell us you
> were Black. And I said oh, really, is that a
> requirement. And oh, no, no, no, I--you just
> didn't tell us you were Black. And as I was
> walking along, I was laughing to myself because I
> could see she was thinking in her head, what did I
> say to this girl, ...and I could just see her
> running through her head oh, my God, I said this
> or that to her....

This mid-grade interviewee has experienced sexual harassment:

> I have also encountered sexual harassment. ...I mean I never felt as though I was being threatened or coerced to do anything, but definitely the sexual innuendoes were there, and I wouldn't think that was attributed to being Black, I mean it's probably just being a female, but I've seen that with officers and enlisted.

A junior-ranking interviewee filed a grievance against her Commanding Officer because of his insensitivity toward Black subordinates:

> The CO at the command told me that I spoke poorly but it was probably cultural and I couldn't do anything about it. I just kind of smiled about it because he was the ignorant one because I know I don't have a speech impediment. However, it bothered me.... I ended up writing a grievance about that situation and the bad part about is that nothing good came out of that. Nothing was learned.... My basic purpose for writing it was to say hey, sir, you seem to be a nice guy but you're making some mistakes here with minorities. You can't say the kinds of things that you are saying to people. You can't go out to a group of Black people, a group of Black civilians and call them you people. You're a skipper and you can't tell a first class that you know I really can't get used to Black History Month. You can't do that because it reduces the morale in your unit. People go out and talk and I knew he had said these things because people came and they told me about it. I used these as examples and even though these were hearsay, I believe it because I know you made this statement to me. I told him about the statement, "it's probably cultural" and he got pissed off with me--I thought the man was going to slap me. Fortunately, I had an advocate in the room with me. The thing that gets me about that is that if I had spoken with him and he had said you know, LT, I really didn't mean to offend anyone.... Maybe, if he had learned something out of it, it would have been worth it but...it turned into an "everyone wants to protect himself" type

thing and this man retired from the Navy. He didn't have a retirement ceremony or anything. He just kind of walked away, just retired.

A senior interviewee was disenchanted with the Navy after a bad experience at a Command function:

They had a dining out, and this was probably the worst racially involved incident that I have experienced in the Navy. ...There was really not a base nearby where we could have it in an officer's club or anything, so the chaplain suggested they have it at this private club of which he was a member. ...And I got up there, went into the club, and when I walked in, I noticed there were all these little old ladies just sitting around, white women. ...I walked in, they all jumped up and they looked at me but they didn't say anything because I was in my uniform. I took off my coat and I said, could you please tell me where the coat check is, and she pointed and I went to the coat check. I gave it to this woman, she stared at me, and I'm thinking, well, I know I'm looking pretty good, but I mean this is ridiculous. And I go into the bar, and everybody in the bar was just like oh, it's ___. ___ has finally arrived, like I was the guest of honor. And they started serving dinner. Now, all of the wait staff was all Black. And as they were serving, they were so busy looking at me, they were tripping over themselves, running into each other.... So, I looked at my XO and I said, what is going on, I'm really starting to get paranoid...it's because you're such a sharp officer. Well, we did the typical dining out things and after it was over...we had a "head" break, and so I just wanted to walk around the club, I had never been inside a private club before. ...And I go up to the woman, and I said, can I ask you a question, and she said, yes. ...Why is everybody staring at me, ...I mean what's up, haven't you ever seen an officer in a uniform? ...And she said, oh, yeah, you're the first colored person to ever walk through the front door. ...So I said to her, wait a minute, is this a restricted club? Oh, yeah. She said no Jews, no women, and especially, no nig--colored people. So, I didn't say a word, I just went to the coat check woman, got my coat, went in, and I

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told the captain, I'm leaving. And he said, what
do you mean, and I said, it's a restricted club.
And he said, how did you find out, and I said, I
just asked.... And so he said, well, you have to
understand, this is the only place where we could
hold this, and I said no, I don't understand, and
I'm not staying here. And he said, well, this
should be an opportunity for you to make history.
You are actually the first Black person to walk
through that door. And you should feel like you
have just broken down the walls of racism in this
club....

M.   THEME XII: MOST INTERVIEWEES FELT THAT THEY WERE UNDERVALUED BY THE NAVY

1.   Theme

When asked the question, "If you had ten minutes with
the CNO, what would you say to him concerning Black female
Naval Officers?," most of the interviewees stated that the
Navy is under-utilizing a most valuable asset--the Black
female Naval Officer. They said that their superiors did not
recognize them as capable Naval Officers. Interviewees
observed that they did not want to be treated any
differently than their White counterparts.

2.   Justification

A junior-ranking interviewee stated that she would tell
the CNO:

I would try to emphasize to him, first of all,
that we are value-added members to the
organization even though some people may not
believe so and that we are just as capable as any
White male.

A mid-grade interviewee would like the CNO to know that:

Well, I would say that we are a resource undervalued in some places.... In my opinion, the best Black female officer that I have met is far better than the best White female officer because we will work twice as hard as our counterparts. I don't know, I would probably just tell him...that...I'm a little bit concerned that the first Black female admiral wasn't appointed until '98, even though I've run across quite a few outstanding Black Captains that have gone home.... Basically, you get a strong Black female officer you get more bodies, if you ask me.... I would tell him...something needs to be done to make sure that just across the board, there should be an environment of fairness and equality.... There's a resource, a potential there, that shouldn't go unnoticed.

Another mid-grade interviewee stated:

Keep the expectations high and give the training and the commensurate responsibility to go along with it so that people can show what they can do and perform and expect it of them. When you expect it of them, demand it of them, they will perform. I mean, those who want to and can succeed and do equally as well as anybody else in the Navy. Give them the opportunities. Don't deny a particular job or a particular experience just because they're Black and I think that's part of the thing is when people are looking at a group and especially the White leadership, you're looking at a group of people mixed, Black and White. Sometimes they will expect more of the white personnel under them and they need to break that mind set. You know, we all can do it if we are given the opportunity and the experience and the training to do it.

Another mid-grade interviewee stated:

I would tell him that he has a large resource pool that he has not tapped, and in order to make people take things serious, he has to set the standards, he has to be at the focal point. If he's not doing it, nobody else is going to do it.

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If you're not leading by example, nobody else is going to take it serious.... CNO, I'm going to be honest with you, you have a large resource of minority women, and if you want to keep these minority women...want your demographics to mirror the real world, you need to fix a lot of things.... You need to fix your career path, you need to fix your communities, you need to figure out what you really want, you need to basically put people in the right places. The world is changing and we need to be able to move a little faster to be able to adjust, we need to change our culture.

A senior-ranking interviewee stated:

Black females have beaten many obstacles to even meet the Navy's total person concept.... We have to understand that, in spite of the words parity, equal opportunity, trying to equalize the opportunity to pass an exam or whatever, the exam is still there, the standards are still there, and if nothing else, on paper, you have to meet a certain requirement for the Navy to even select you. After that, you're trying--I mean you show up as a black woman and you've got to fit the uniform, you've got to hopefully fit the mode of being a professional and someone who can handle people. And I think the CNO should know that the Black women who make it into the Navy are of a caliber that they should be given the opportunity to be listened to, held accountable, and face the consequences for their actions, just like everyone else. I mean, if we're "cutting the mustard", we should be given the rewards. When we aren't, don't keep passing us up, I mean let us know, we aren't here by chance. If we aren't "cutting the mustard" we aren't happy anyway, so just tell us the truth and let us go instead of just passing the problem on. Don't be afraid to...handle us the same way you handle the majority.

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. SUMMARY

The literature reviewed in this thesis shows how Black women have been dealing with the racism and sexism in their lives. Such negative influences have played a role in the formation of the Black female work consciousness, both in the civilian labor force and in the military.

This thesis concentrates on the perspectives and experiences of Black female naval officers and finds that issues of race and gender in the Navy are a reflection of related issues in society. The Black female naval officer is not only penetrating a White-dominated culture in her career choice, but she is also penetrating a hyper-masculine organization. Being Black and being female are factors by which the Black female naval officer is both evaluated and stereotyped. This thesis also identifies behaviors that Black female naval officers use to manage their role-identity problems.

The 18 Black female naval officers interviewed gave detailed accounts of their experiences and perspectives while in the Navy. These interviews produced 12 major themes that show how Black female naval officers see

themselves and how they respond to treatment in the naval

environment they have chosen:

Theme I: Most interviewees were exposed to the military at a young age

Theme II: Most interviewees joined the navy primarily for job opportunities, education, and travel

Theme III: All interviewees felt that they had to work harder than their counterparts to be successful

Theme IV: Most interviewees felt that they had to leave a part of their identity home to adapt to the dominant culture and be successful in the navy

Theme V: All interviewees maintained their black identity by having strong support systems outside the navy

Theme VI: Most interviewees concentrated on spiritual development to cope with personal obstacles

Theme VII: Many interviewees stated that their most rewarding experience was being able to help subordinates grow professionally

Theme VIII: All interviewees had faced adversities, but stayed and generally enjoyed being in the navy

Theme IX: Many interviewees were skeptical about the navy's minority recruiting efforts

Theme X: Most interviewees believed that they were expected to "represent" their race

Theme XI: All interviewees experienced discrimination in the navy

Theme XII: Most interviewees felt that they were undervalued by the navy

B.   CONCLUSIONS

The findings in this thesis indicate that all interviewees experienced role conflict regarding job

expectations and job performance. They not only felt they had to perform better than their White counterparts but they felt pressure to perform well to compensate for both their race and their gender. The interviewees had to cope with: (1) negative stereotypes about their abilities, (2) being the "only one" and (3) unrealistically low or high expectations. A significant amount of energy is expended on trying to figure out what role one plays, causing confusion and high levels of stress. These findings are consistent with Webb's study on Black female naval officers:

> The emotions experienced by Blacks in the dominant White setting can be confusing, debilitating, and often dysfunctional for the Black manager. Black managers are unable to divorce themselves from the process of the interaction to ascertain what part they own, what part the other person owns, and what the situation is contributing to the interaction. Black managers often experience a high level of stress because they cannot identify the source of the discomfort. All this confusion of emotion, self-debasement and conflicting desire to acknowledge one's own competence leaves many Black managers with the feeling of "going crazy." [Ref 9:p. 123]

The findings in this thesis also indicate that many Black female naval officers felt that various forms of racial and gender discrimination are still present in the Navy--despite continuing efforts to eliminated such discrimination. Indeed, many interviewees had experienced overt racism and sexism. These findings are supported by the latest Navy Equal Opportunity/Sexual Harassment (NEOSH) Survey, conducted in 1997. The (NEOSH) results reveal that

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discrimination based on race and gender is still a problem in the Navy. Webb also found similar results in his study. [Ref 9:p. 100] These findings highlight the importance of race and gender as they affect Black female naval officers. It is important to understand that both racism and sexism have a negative impact on Black women's overall effectiveness in the naval environment.

This thesis also finds that Black female naval officers use various coping strategies to manage stress caused by role conflicts and discrimination. They do not always focus their lives and friends around the Navy. They make use of social interaction and support systems (i.e., other Black officers, Blacks in their communities, church, NNOA). Maintaining a feeling of togetherness and being able to receive psychological support from friends and family is crucial to both the survival and success of the Black female naval officer. Once again, a significant amount of energy is expended in developing these coping skills.

Webb also addresses these coping strategies in his study:

> European-Americans do not need to develop different, protective, and specific coping strategies because they are not targets of racial prejudice or discrimination. African-American female (and male) officers can survive without managing conflict, although it may limit their success, but they will not survive for long without managing the additive effects of racial and sexual prejudice, harassment, or discrimination. [Ref 9:p. 136]

The Navy is not designed for heterogeneity (diversity) but rather for homogeneity (sameness). The Navy, as an organization, does not place great value on differences, and Black women are often expected to conform or "fit in." This thesis reveals that, even though the interviewees overcame adversities and remained in the Navy, they found it difficult to adjust to the historical and traditional, written and unwritten rules. Because Black women are forced to "fit in," they are unable to bring their "whole-person" to work, inhibiting, to some extent, their expression of creativity and individuality. As a result, the Navy is less effective because it does not have the full utilization of its entire people.

C.   RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The navy needs to, first, admit that there is a problem and be willing to confront racism and sexism head on.

We are each made up of the sum total of our experiences and, if the Navy continues to pretend that we are all the same, the problems of racism and sexism will fester. The success of the Navy requires maximum participation from *all* naval personnel, and it is the responsibility of the leaders of the Navy to ensure that the environment is accepting of every culture.

For many years now, the Navy has reiterated its belief of the basic equality of opportunity available to Blacks in the organization and its resolve to make that belief a reality. Unless the concern for seeking equality is maintained and reinforced, the program will lose gains that have been made. In the end, the Navy's environment must be positive, and it must completely accept Black female naval officers into the entire fabric of the Navy.

2. The Navy must develop a Diversity Training Program for *all* personnel. Managing diversity is among the most important challenges that face leaders of the Navy today because diversity issues affect every facet of the Navy.

Managing diversity is a management perspective that focuses on creating a climate in which the potential advantages of diversity for organizational or group performance are maximized while its potential disadvantages are minimized. [Ref 27:p. 23]

As the Navy becomes a more diverse institution, it is important that a formal diversity program be established to bring about a "cultural change." The Navy has established numerous policies and directives aimed at increasing minority representation within the officer corps and insuring equal opportunity and fair treatment for all naval personnel. These policies and directives have not been sufficient enough to bring about the needed cultural change.

While awareness and understanding have become a staple of the Navy's diversity strategy, the policies and directives adopted to increase awareness and understanding are simply not working.

The best way to implement a diversity program is through a "total systems change" approach that will support a heterogeneous working environment where everyone is treated with respect and valued. [Ref 24] It would result in individuals in the Navy valuing a wide range of people who are unlike themselves and valuing the unique strengths and contributions of everyone.

A "total systems approach" would not only require changing the Navy's systems, policies, and practices but also its core culture. The principle of valuing diversity must be part of the foundation of the Navy's culture and be an integrated part of the Navy's strategic planning process. Cultural change is a long, slow process that takes years to achieve, and it takes a strong commitment from the highest level of leadership. An effective diversity program will enable the Navy to tap the full potential of all naval personnel, maximizing their ability to contribute to the Navy's mission.

The Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP) and Chief of Naval Education and Training (CNET) should work together to develop and implement a total systems change. CNP should be

responsible for the overall implementation, evaluating the Navy's culture and systems, while CNET should be responsible for developing specific diversity education and training programs.

Diversity training should be taught at all Leadership Continuum courses for both officers and enlisted personnel to ensure that racially, ethically, and gender-diverse students are learning in a peer environment. Some Leadership Continuum courses currently have a module dedicated to diversity training, but it has limited effectiveness. [Ref 26] CNET should revamp the entire diversity training program and incorporate a "Managing Diversity" approach in *all* Leadership Continuum courses. Since *all* officers and enlisted personnel cycle through a number of the Leadership Continuum courses at various stages in their careers, a process for ongoing education on diversity issues would automatically be in place. Diversity-awareness training should also be addressed at entry points, i.e., boot camp, Officer Candidate School, Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps, the Naval Academy, and so on.

Highly trained facilitators must be used to conduct diversity training. The levels of skill of the facilitators will determine the effectiveness of the training. The issue of diversity is a highly sensitive one and there will undoubtedly be individuals in the group who will be hostile

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to the training. A highly trained facilitator makes the difference between a successful training evolution and a dysfunctional learning experience.

Diversity issues are as important as other issues affecting readiness, and they should be given the same degree of attention. Managing Diversity education is the key to implementing change in the Navy's culture.

3. The Navy should be more aggressive in recruiting Black female naval officers.

There are currently over 7,000 female naval officers, but less than 800 of them are Black. Although some Black female officers have "come up through the ranks," most enter the services at the officer level after successfully completing a college education. Even though the number of Black women who are going to college has increased over the years, the percentage is still relatively small. As a result, the Navy is forced to compete for officer candidates from a very small manpower pool. There are very few NROTC units at historically Black colleges. The Navy should explore the possibility of increasing the number of NROTC units at historically Black colleges.

D. AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Because of the relatively small sample of Black female naval officers in this thesis, the reader should not use the results of this study to generalize about all Black female

officers in the Navy. The following are potential areas for further research.

1. Conduct a survey that will include all Black female naval officers.

Only 18 Black females were interviewed as part of this study. It would be inappropriate to draw conclusions about 795 Black female officers, based on the beliefs and perceptions of such a small sample. Nevertheless, this study could be used to develop a comprehensive survey. It is recommended that a mail survey be used in an attempt to reach 100 percent of the target population.

2. Conduct a study that will compare the experiences and perspectives of all minorities in the Navy.

The experiences and perceptions of other minorities are as important as those of Black female naval officers. It is recommended that a study of all minorities be conducted. This study could be in the form of in-depth interviews or a mail survey. This study would ideally capture the feelings of minorities as a whole and address the various subgroup issues that undoubtedly exists especially those of women who are racial or ethnic minorities.

3. Conduct a study on the Navy's evaluation system.

During the course of this thesis, several officers expressed uneasiness about the fairness of the fitness report. The last study conducted by Chief of Naval

Operations (CNO) study group in 1988 showed that Blacks tended to receive lower marks than did their White counterparts. [Ref 22] That study is now 10 years old and needs to be updated.

4. Examine the feasibility of increasing the number of NROTC units at Historically Black Colleges.

Apparently, the Army has been able to successfully recruit minorities primarily because of the large number of NROTC units in historically Black colleges. [Ref 23] The Army's approach should be thoroughly examined to see what makes it so successful and whether there are any elements of the approach that could be used by the Navy.

APPENDIX A. SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS

Navy Community	Rank	YCS	Prior Enl	Comm Source
Fleet Support	LCDR	11	yes	OCS
Fleet Support	CDR	16	no	OCS
Fleet Support	LCDR	13	no	NROTC
Fleet Support	CAPT	20	no	OCS
Fleet Support	LCDR	13	yes	OCS
Fleet Support	LCDR	17	no	OCS
Fleet Support	LCDR	16	no	OCS
Fleet Support	CAPT	24	no	OCS
Fleet Support	LT	6	yes	NROTC
Fleet Support	LCDR	15	no	OCS
Fleet Support	ENS	1	no	USNA
Fleet Support	LT	6	yes	NROTC
Medical Service Corps	LT	8	yes	OIS
Fleet Support	LT	10	yes	NROTC
Fleet Support	LT	6	no	USNA
Fleet Support	LCDR	13	no	OCS
Fleet Support	CAPT	21	no	NROTC
Medical Service Corps	LT	4	yes	OIS

APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Introduction:
I would like to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to interview you. I am interviewing approximately 20 Black female naval officers as part of my thesis research. My thesis will focus primarily on attitudes and experiences of Black female naval officers in an attempt to identify the underlying reasons why Black women choose to serve in the Navy and why they stay.

This thesis is near and dear to me because of my experiences in the Navy: the good, the bad, and the ugly. This thesis will hopefully help me to better understand my experiences and also share experiences of other Black female officers in the Navy. My thesis research has been quite interesting. I have found that a lot of research has been done on minorities and women in general but very few studies have been done on Black women. I think we have a story to be told and if we don't tell it, who will?

Your participation is confidential and no one will be told who participated in the interviews, and although I will be using specific comments and opinions you may express, I will not identify you by name. Because there are so few senior Black female officers, I will refer to you in my thesis simply as a junior officer (01-04) or a senior officer (05-010). I hope that this promise of confidentiality will help you feel free to express your honest opinions.

I am asking you to give me some demographic data on these mini-surveys. My intent here is to be able to document that I interviewed officers from various ranks and from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. These surveys are also confidential and you will not be identified.

Do you have any questions for me before we start the interview?

Interview Questions:
1. Why did you join the Navy? Who was most influential in your decision to join? What are the earliest memories you have about being interested in a military career? Did you have relatives in the military (mother, father, siblings, aunt, uncle, etc)?
2. What was your commissioning source? Tell me about your experiences at ROTC, OCS, Naval Academy, etc.
3. What is it like being a black female in the Navy? What has it been like for you being the "only one"?
4. Have you been able to maintain your identity as a black woman in the Navy? Do you feel that you've had to compromise yourself in anyway, say--to "fit" into the Navy's culture—to be successful or effective as a leader?
5. What was your most rewarding experience as a Naval Officer? Who was involved? What made it so rewarding? What has been your least rewarding experience?
6. Are you married? Do you have children? How has the dual role – officer and homemaker – affected your naval career or assignments choices?
7. Do you think you are treated fairly in decisions concerning your career, that is, with respect to your non-minority counterparts? Have you benefited or been hurt by your minority status? Explain.
8. If you had 10 minutes with the CNO, what would you tell him concerning black females in the Navy that we didn't cover in this interview?

Wrap up:
Do you have any other opinions about issues surrounding Black female naval officers that you think are relevant to my analysis, and that you haven't already addressed?

Closing:
I would like to remind you that your comments and opinions maybe used in my thesis. Your identity, though, will remain anonymous. Once again, I would like to thank you for your contribution to this project. This was a successful interview and your honest and forthright responses will be an enormous asset to my work.

DEMOGRAPHICS

To validate my interviews, I must have a record to show that participants came from varied ranks and backgrounds. The information provided here will only be used in aggregate form and no attempt will be made to match this information to individuals or opinions expressed in the interviews. Thank you for you time and patience.

1. Rank:_____
2. Race/ethnicity:_____
3. Service Community:_____
4. Commissioning source:_____
5. Years of commissioned service:_____
6. Prior enlisted: Yes   No
7. Level of Education:_____

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